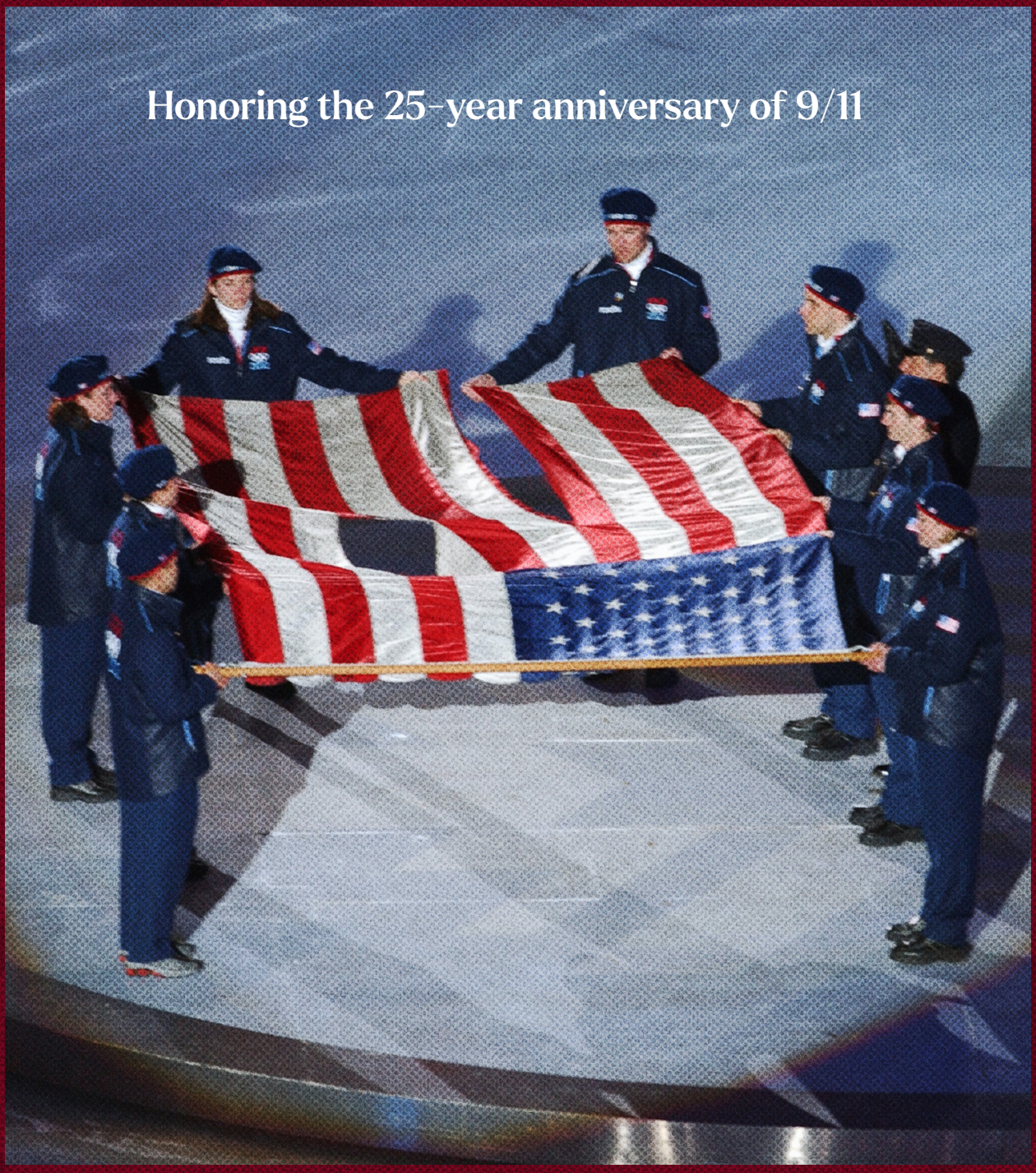
QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER



THE OLYMPIAN & PARALYMPIAN

FALL 2026 ISSUE

A LETTER FROM USOPA PRESIDENT

Building the Future Together Toward LA28

The 2026 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly, held September 23–26 in Colorado Springs, brought together athletes, alumni, National Governing Bodies, USOPC leadership, councils, partners and organizations from across the Olympic and Paralympic Movement. More than an annual gathering, the Assembly provided an important opportunity to listen, reconnect and work together around a shared vision for the future. The USOPC describes the Assembly as a forum designed to keep dialogue open among its member organizations and strengthen the Olympic and Paralympic Movement in the United States.

For USOPA, this year's Assembly was particularly meaningful as we continue preparing for Los Angeles 2028. LA28 represents an opportunity to bring the experiences, leadership and legacy of Olympians and Paralympians into communities across the country and to introduce a new generation to the values of the Olympic and Paralympic Movements. USOPC's current strategic plan similarly identifies LA28 as an inflection point and catalyst for strengthening the Movement and expanding engagement with athletes, NGBs and communities.

As USOPA looks toward LA28, our Executive Committee has been focused on four foundational Pillars: Chapters, National Governing Bodies, Paralympians and Legacy. Each Pillar represents an essential part of who we are and how we can serve the broader Movement. Our Chapters create the local connection; our NGB relationships connect alumni to the sports that shaped their Olympic and Paralympic journeys; our Paralympic community ensures that the full Team USA experience and voice are represented; and Legacy reminds us that our greatest value is not only what we accomplished as athletes, but what we can continue to contribute long after competition ends.

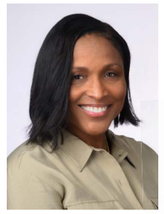
The real opportunity is in connecting these Pillars rather than viewing them as separate areas of work. Stronger relationships between Chapters and NGBs can create opportunities for mentorship, community programs, athlete engagement and shared resources. Greater engagement with Paralympians strengthens the entire alumni community and helps ensure that Olympic and Paralympic experiences are represented together. And when these relationships are connected to Legacy, our collective history becomes a living resource—something that can educate, inspire and serve athletes and communities for generations to come.

The Executive Committee's work is therefore centered on a simple question: How can USOPA become more connected, more engaged and more valuable to the Movement as we approach LA28? That means strengthening our Chapters, developing meaningful relationships with NGBs, expanding opportunities for Paralympians, and creating intentional ways to preserve and activate the stories and experiences of our alumni. It also means looking beyond 2028. LA28 should be a launchpad for what comes next—not a finish line.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the Assembly was the opportunity to experience the Movement together. Sitting at the same table with athletes, NGB leaders, USOPC leadership, councils and fellow alumni reinforce something that can sometimes be difficult to see from a distance: we are all connected by a common cause. The conversations become more meaningful when we are together, relationships become stronger, and ideas move from discussion toward action. As USOPC leadership emphasized during the Assembly, the value of being together in person is the opportunity to strengthen relationships and make dialogue more candid and productive.

For USOPA, that connection is at the heart of our purpose. We are alumni. We carry the memories of representing our country, but we also carry the responsibility and opportunity to give back. Our experiences can mentor the next generation, strengthen communities, support athletes, inspire young people and help preserve the history of the Olympic and Paralympic Movement. Our four Pillars provide the foundation, but our athletes and alumni are the force that brings them to life.

As we continue the journey toward Los Angeles, the work ahead is both exciting and important. Our four Pillars are the foundation. Our athletes are the force. And LA28 is the catalyst. Together—with our Chapters, NGBs, Paralympians, USOPC partners and the thousands of Olympians and Paralympians who make up our alumni community—we have an opportunity to build something that extends well beyond the Games. The goal is not simply to arrive in Los Angeles in 2028. It is to arrive connected, engaged and ready to leave a lasting legacy for the generations that follow.



Best,

Jackie Washington
USOPA President

Jackie Washington





ALUMNI RELATIONS UPDATE

Dear USOPA members,

Coming off the 2026 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly, the USOPC and USOPA are *preparing to launch*, not just toward LA28, but toward the incredible opportunities that LA28 represents for the Olympic & Paralympic Movement, Team USA, and generations of athletes and alumni to come.

One of the biggest takeaways from the USOPA Annual Meeting in Colorado Springs was **ALIGNMENT**. Not just within USOPA, but across the Movement. Conversations with NGBs, AOCs, the USOPC, and the Team USA Athletes' Commission all centered around one common question: **"How can we work together?"** The answer is clear, by building stronger partnerships, sharing resources, and ensuring that athletes and alumni remain at the heart of the Movement. The Alumni Relations team is energized and ready to continue advocating for USOPA and Team USA alumni as we prepare for one of the most exciting moments in sports history.

USOPA Executive Committee election voting is now open. If you have not received a ballot via email, please contact Christine Taylor. Voting closes on November 9, 2026, with results to be announced shortly thereafter.

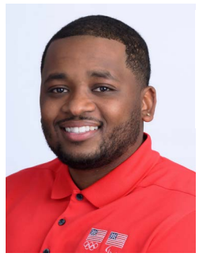
If you're interested in becoming involved with LA28 directly, whether as a volunteer, to learn more about event tickets, or simply to better understand the opportunities available to athletes surrounding the Games—this is the first time in history that an Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (OCOG) has established a dedicated Athlete Relations team. To connect with them, email athleteconnect@la28.org.

With LA28 rapidly approaching, organizations in communities across the country are starting to catch Olympic and Paralympic fever. One of the best ways to build excitement and positive momentum around the Games is to share your story and engage with those eager to learn from your experiences. Join your local USOPA Chapter at upcoming events, consider stepping into a leadership role, and help inspire the next generation of Team USA supporters. Don't have a Chapter nearby? Take advantage of our new Legacy Lattes program (email Robbie for details) and connect with fellow alumni in your area. Interested in starting a Chapter? We'd love to help make that happen.

Have other ideas? Join USOPA Office Hours, held on the second Friday of each month from 1:00–2:00 p.m. MST on Zoom, and tell us what's been floating around in your brain. We want to hear it. We also offer mileage reimbursement for travel to local events that help advance the Olympic and Paralympic Movement, so let us know where you're making an impact in your communities and how we can support your efforts.

The road to LA28 is getting shorter every day, and together we have a unique opportunity to shape what this moment means for athletes, alumni, and the future of Team USA. Let's make the most of it.

In Olympic and Paralympic Spirit,



Robbie Fulton II

Robbie Fulton II
USOPC Alumni Relations Manager

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19 Feb 2002: Derek Parra of the USA, winner of the gold medal in a new World and Olympic record of 1:43.95 seconds, takes a lap of honor with his coach Bart Schouten after the men's 1500m speed skating event during the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games at the Utah Olympic Oval in Salt Lake City, Utah. DIGITAL IMAGE. Mandatory Credit: Jamie Squire/Getty Images



STARS, STRIPES, AND SOULS
THE MOMENT BEFORE GOLD

101st Airborne soldiers (L-R) Spl. Christian Dancescu from Beaverton, OR, PFC Christiana Helle from Pleasantview, TN, SPC Wade Kennedy from Dickinson, ND and Sgt. Ricardo Rosich from Ponce, Puerto Rico watch as the American flag from Ground Zero is brought out at the Opening Ceremony of the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games February 8, 2002 in Kandahar, Afghanistan.

Written by Robbie Fulton

For many Olympians and Paralympians, the pinnacle of their career could be standing on the podium with a medal around their neck. For Derek Parra, the defining moment of the 2002 Winter Olympic Games came before he ever stepped onto the ice to compete.

In the months leading up to the Salt Lake City Games, Parra was consumed by the same grief and uncertainty that gripped the nation following the attacks of September 11, 2001. On September 10, he traveled from Utah to Florida to attend a wedding. The next morning, he awoke to a transformed world.

Like millions of Americans, Parra spent the following days glued to television coverage. The tragedy left him questioning everything, including the value of pursuing Olympic dreams while the country mourned. A speed skater who had devoted most of his life to chasing excellence, he suddenly felt disconnected from the sport that had defined him.

"I was embarrassed to be a speed skater," Parra recalled. "I was seeing images of people being pulled from the rubble, and I thought, how can I put so much value on skating around in circles when people are suffering like this?"

When he returned to Utah, Parra made a dramatic decision: he quit skating. He informed his coaches he could no longer focus on training and was ready to walk away from the Olympic pursuit altogether. Yet over the following weeks, conversations with coaches, teammates, and sports psychologist Doug Jowdy helped him find a new perspective.

Gradually, Parra realized that competing in the Olympics could be about something much larger than personal achievement. If he made the Games and performed well, perhaps he could provide a brief moment of pride, hope, or escape for people still carrying the weight of September 11.

"That became my focus," he said. "It wasn't about me anymore. It was about giving people something to cheer about."

The renewed purpose transformed his training. Parra returned to the ice with a sense of mission, and his performances quickly improved. Qualifying for the Olympic Games with growing confidence, on the eve of the Opening Ceremony, he received a phone call that would forever change his Olympic experience.

The U.S. Olympic Committee informed him that he had been selected as one of eight athletes chosen to carry the World Trade Center flag into the Opening Ceremony.

"I was quiet for a moment, in awe" Parra remembered. "Then I simply said, 'I'll do it.'"

Parra never hesitated. The opportunity meant too much.

What followed remains one of the most emotional memories of his life.

As the eight athletes gathered around the flag, words became unnecessary. They stood together in silence, running their fingers across the fabric. Parra describes the experience as deeply spiritual.

"The only way I've ever described it is that my soul was being touched," he said.

When they entered Rice-Eccles Stadium, the atmosphere was unlike anything he had ever experienced. The crowd fell silent. Above them, helicopters circled. Around the stadium, heightened security served as a reminder of the world still healing from tragedy.

"It felt like time stood still," Parra said.

As the national anthem began, a gust of wind pushed against the flag. In that moment, Parra felt an overwhelming presence.

"I heard voices saying, 'We're with you. We're behind you.'"

When the ceremony ended, the athletes embraced one another without speaking. Parra returned to his room carrying a profound sense of peace that had eluded him for months.

"I slept that night with a peace I'd never known in my heart," he recalled.

The next morning, he took to the ice with complete clarity. The burden of outcomes had disappeared. He no longer skated for medals or personal glory. He simply wanted to honor those affected by September 11 and represent something greater than himself.

That perspective freed him of ANY pressures.

Parra delivered the race of his life, recording a personal best and earning a silver medal in the 5,000 meters before later capturing gold in the 1,500 meters. Yet even today, he insists the medals were not the highlight of the Games.

In fact, when former Salt Lake Organizing Committee president Mitt Romney later asked what his greatest Olympic moment had been, Parra answered without hesitation.

"Carrying the flag."

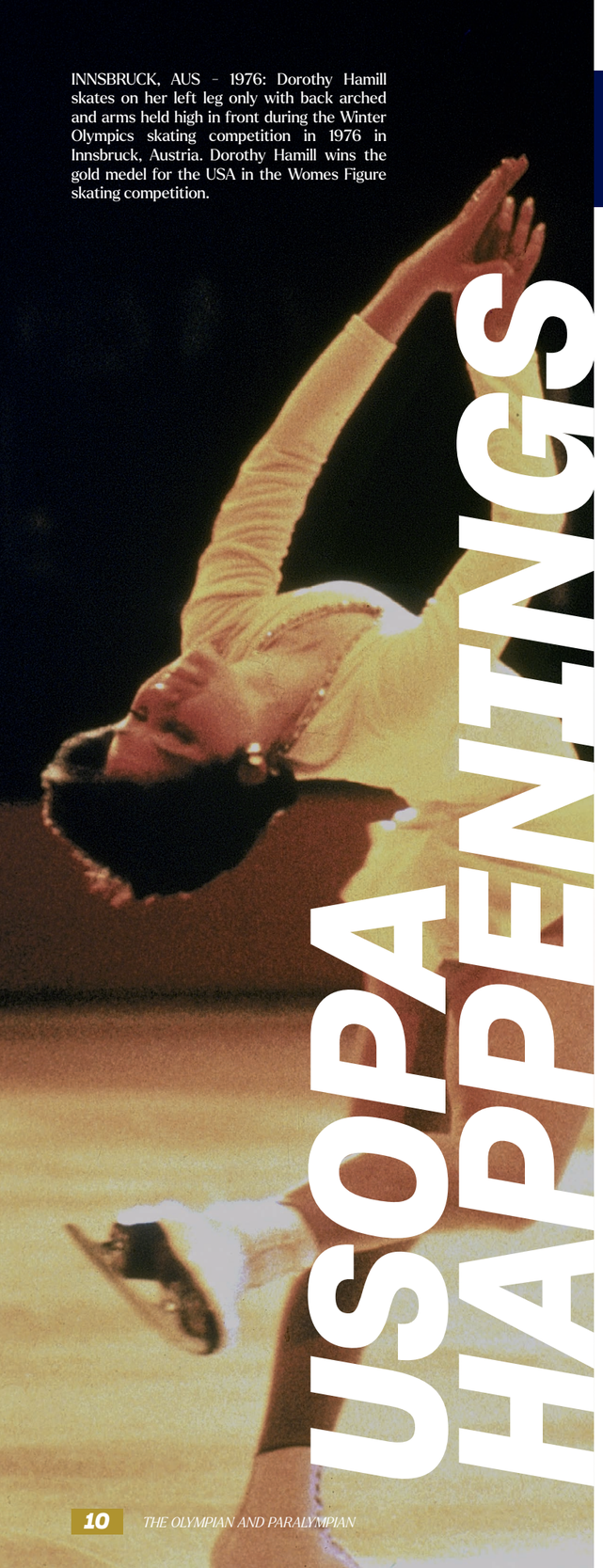
Not the gold medal. Not the silver medal. The flag.

More than two decades later, the memory still guides him. The experience reinforced his belief in the power of community, service, and human connection.

"The Games brings the world together," Parra said. "And that flag represented more than our country. To me, it represented people everywhere who were affected by that tragedy. It represented our shared humanity."

Today, when Parra shares his Olympic story, he finds that audiences connect most deeply not with the races or the medals, but with the lesson that emerged from one of the darkest moments in modern history: that communities matter, that people are strongest when they come together, and that sometimes the most meaningful victories have nothing to do with a scoreboard.

For Derek Parra, the greatest prize of the 2002 Winter Games was not made of gold or silver. It was the honor of carrying stars and stripes that had souls tied to it forever and the responsibility of carrying the hopes of a nation.



INNSBRUCK, AUS – 1976: Dorothy Hamill skates on her left leg only with back arched and arms held high in front during the Winter Olympics skating competition in 1976 in Innsbruck, Austria. Dorothy Hamill wins the gold medel for the USA in the Womes Figure skating competition.

USOPA HAPPENINGS

SCOPA x LA SPARKS



Southern California Olympians and Paralympians Chapter conducted a chapter community event at a WNBA game in August, and the "Ready, Set, Gold!" leadership obtained free tickets for the group and also advanced the funds to buy everyone a concession snack and beverage. About 35 Olympians/Paralympians and guests attended along with 18+ members of the local community group.

The students were introduced on the hardwood at half-time, and the Olympians and Paralympians in the stands were featured on the big screen during a timeout.



USOPA AND TEAM USA ATHLETES' COMMISSION MEETING

During this year's U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly, members of the USOPA Executive Committee and the Team USA Athletes' Commission gathered for a collaborative meeting focused on strengthening support for Team USA athletes and alumni.



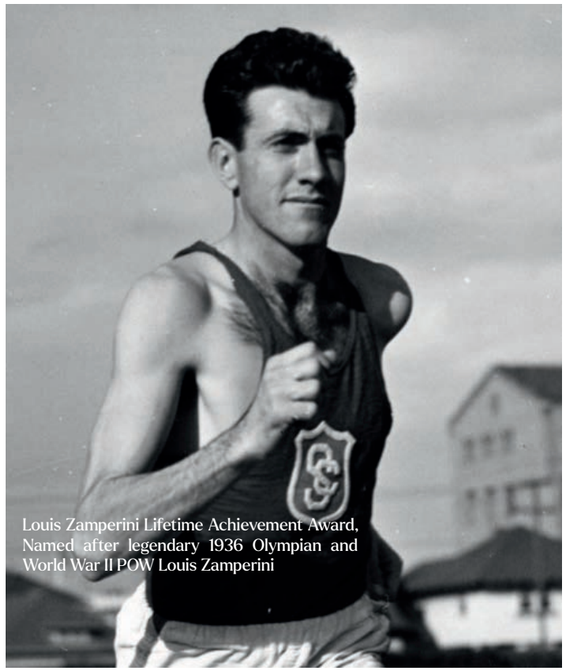
The session opened with remarks from Team USA Athletes' Commission Chair Joel Rosinbum and USOPA Past President Willie Banks, followed by a presentation from Billy Lister III outlining the USOPA Executive Committee's pillar initiatives: NGBs, Paralymians, Chapters, and Legacy. From there, both groups participated in roundtable discussions exploring ways to further the athlete and alumni movement, strengthen collaboration, and build momentum toward LA28 as a launchpad for the future of Team USA and its athlete and alumni community.



USOPA AWARDS CELEBRATED ON WEBSITE

New to the Team USA Alumni Awards page is a meaningful look into the impact of USOPA honors. Rooted in the values that define the Olympic and Paralympic movement, this space highlights how USOPA members continue to lead with purpose across their lives, whether in their professions, within their communities, or through service to others. It serves as a celebration of impact in all its forms, showcasing how the lessons of sport continue to shape leaders long after competition ends.

Bringing together the full slate of USOPA honors that have existed for years, but whose recipients have never been this visible, the page recognizes and reflects excellence at every stage of the USOPA journey. Featured awards include the USOPA Award of Excellence, The Dorothy Franey Langkop Ambassador Award, and The Louis Zamperini Lifetime Achievement Award, each honoring a unique kind of impact from lifelong achievement to community connection and leadership within the USOPA network.



Louis Zamperini Lifetime Achievement Award, Named after legendary 1936 Olympian and World War II POW Louis Zamperini

THE PODIUM



Nzingha Prescod of the United States and Astrid Guyart of France compete during the women's individual foil on Day 5 of the Rio 2016 Olympic Games at Carioca Arena 3 on August 10, 2016 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Welcome to The Podium, a quarterly spotlight of life updates, career or personal milestones, and more from USOPA members across the country. This is an opportunity to stay connected with fellow alumni who choose to take the podium and give us an inside look into their lives!

Carissa Gordon, OLY

Weightlifting | 2008

2008 Olympian Carissa Gordon, DBA, MPA, OLY, earned her Doctor of Business Administration in Nonprofit Management and Leadership from Liberty University. Carissa has built her career in sport, nonprofit leadership, and service to the Olympic and Paralympic community. She previously worked with USA Weightlifting and the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, and for the past 10 years has served as Executive Director of the National Strength and Conditioning Association Foundation. She currently serves as Secretary and Awards Committee Chair of the U.S. Olympians and Paralympic Endowment and as the Vice President of the U.S. Olympians and Paralympians Relief Fund.



Jan Palchikoff, OLY

Rowing | 1976, '80



1976 was the first year that women's rowing was ever included in the Olympic program. At the height of an era of institutionalized cheating through drug use by certain countries, the US women's rowing team achieved remarkable success. In all, 23 American athletes competed in the six events on the schedule. Joan Lind won the silver medal in the women's single sculls, earning the first Olympic rowing medal ever by an American woman. Later that same day, the US women's eight of Brown, DeFrantz, Graves, Greig, McCarthy, Ricketson, Warner, Zoch, Silliman (coxswain) won the bronze. The women's double sculls and women's coxed four were also finalists, placing fifth and sixth respectively, with the



remaining two crews of the quad and pair winning their B finals, placing 7th overall. This extraordinary group of athletes included significant advocates who had fought hard for women's inclusion in the sport. Notably, Joanne Iverson, the USA team manager, a pioneer rower from Philadelphia, worked for years with others in the US and other countries to get women's rowing added to the Olympic program. Anita DeFrantz, a member of that bronze medal eight, became an IOC member and is the first woman to serve as Vice President of the IOC. Jan Palchikoff, a member of the women's double, went on to oversee the rowing venue for the 1984 Olympic Games. And Chris Ernst, a spare on the team, famously led the Title IX protest at Yale, which had a profound impact on collegiate sports. Other 1976 team members became the first women collegiate and international coaches in the United States, and many others remained involved as leadership volunteers within US Rowing, World Rowing (formerly FISA) and the USOPC. Today, in 2026, as we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Montreal Games, we honor these unique athletes who individually and collectively set the bar high, not only for the sport of women's rowing, but through their endeavors off the racecourse as ambassadors of the highest Olympic ideals.



Kelly Salchow MacArthur, OLY

Rowing | 2000, '04

In 2023 Kelly initiated a public-facing project to align with Ann Arbor's Bicentennial: The City of Ann Arbor, Michigan celebrated its bicentennial in 2024 with a series of community-centered events. This was the perfect opportunity to recognize Ann Arbor's Olympians and Paralympians through a permanent physical artifact, while simultaneously inspiring the next generation of athletes. As the City of Ann Arbor developed a plan for the new Bicentennial Park in an underserved area, plans emerged as this being the ideal place for signage listing the local Olympians and Paralympians (in addition to fun facts). Kelly's hope is that this signage conveys Ann Arbor's rich legacy in sport, inspires the youth who play at the park as they discover their own potential, and serves as a monument to excellence by sharing information with the community about the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The City of Ann Arbor organized a half day event to celebrate the new Bicentennial Park (complete with accessible play structure and splash pad) and Olympic/Paralympic signage. This was a youth-centered outreach and engagement event that aimed to inspire youth to become more active, while integrating culture



and heritage. It served as an active and diverse way to connect the community with the local OLY/PLY athletes, while recognizing the permanent commemoration to remain for future visitors. It prompted the public to embrace the new park facilities during the inclusive free and open event. The event included: Dedication speeches, including Mayor Christopher Taylor, Kelly Salchow MacArthur, and Paralympian Michelle Konkoly. There was Olympic trivia, games, chalk drawing, music, food, a wheelchair mini-clinic, and a lot of activity exploring the new park play facilities. The event unveiled the city's first permanent signage listing local OLY/PLY, which Kelly researched and designed. Funding from the World Olympians Association supported the project. In total, 224 athlete names are listed (some more than once, if they competed in more than one Games). Athletes who attended the July 11 event, were introduced and participated in activities: Dale Dedrick, PLY (Para Equestrian, 2012), Mason Ferlic, OLY (Track and Field, 2020), Michelle Konkoly, PLY (Para Swimming, 2016), Kate Mackenzie, OLY (Rowing, 2004), Kelly Salchow MacArthur, OLY (Rowing, 2000, 2004) Lauren Schmetterling, OLY (Rowing, 2016). 2,000+ community members attended the free and accessible event.

Kelly's LinkedIn Page: Click Here

Laurel Brassey Iversen, OLY

Women's Volleyball | 1980, '88

From Laurel:



An alumni event was organized in Anaheim in early August by Kim Hill, OLY, Kelsey Robinson Cook ,OLY and Alisha Glass Childress, OLY. National Team members and Olympians were invited to attend a training session with the current USA Team. It was fun to watch the training, see the latest technology, and talk to the athletes and coaches. Head Coach Eric Sullivan was a great host. He is doing a nice job of making sure there are reminders of the legacy of our women's team program. We had a good laugh at the snack box available to the players at practice. We couldn't imagine such a great thing being allowed at our practices back in the late 70's and early 80's. Everything from tofu to chocolate. A small group gathered the same evening at The VIV Hotel rooftop bar.



We enjoyed many of the stories shared around the table between Olympians from 1980 – 2024. Saturday was free until the evening party at Alisha Glass Childress's home. It was a beautiful evening with a catered taco meal and an open bar. Kim Hill asked me to speak about the unique bond of the 1980 team, and Debbie Green, OLY about the 1984 first medal for USA Volleyball. Tayyiba Haneef-Park, OLY spoke about continuity and legacy of the program and Jordan Poulter, OLY spoke about the current team and what the support of the older players has meant to them. Cassidy Lichtman said a bit about the Women's World Cup 27 to be held in Anaheim.

I was very happy to speak to so many team members, especially some of the new ones. Everyone was so kind and interested. We hope to organize more National Team events in the future and take advantage of the opportunities that will be available for the WWC27 and LA28.



Nzingha Prescod, OLY

Fencing | 2012, '16



via Instagram @nzinghap

In September 2026 at the U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly Nzingha was honored with the Rings of Gold awards which inaugurated in 1996 and recognizes an individual dedicated to helping children develop their Olympic or Paralympic dreams and reach their highest athletic and personal potential.

Just months after her retirement, Prescod launched Fencing in the Park, a free outdoor fencing program in local parks across Brooklyn, New York. She expanded the program into the Prescod Institute for Sport, Teamwork, and Education, where she serves as founder and CEO

while continuing to work directly with young athletes as a hands-on teacher and mentor. Through PISTE, she has introduced children to a new sport, creating opportunities for young people in communities where fencing had traditionally been absent.

Prescod has also worked to make the Olympic experience tangible for her students, bringing PISTE athletes to national television on The Kelly Clarkson Show and taking students to Paris in 2024 to experience the Olympic Opening Ceremony. By building spaces where children can envision themselves as athletes, Prescod has shown a new generation that their Olympic dreams are possible.

Beyond her work with young athletes, Prescod serves as an elected Athlete Director on the USA Fencing Board of Directors and was an integral part of the USOPC Council on Social and Racial Justice. She was the inaugural recipient of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Foundation's Team USA Community Champions in Partnership with Comcast award and was inducted into the USA Fencing Hall of Fame in 2024.

Link to her foundation: Here



via pisteacademy.org



Nancy Hogshead, OLY

Swimming | 1980, '84

At the 2026 U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Assembly Nancy was honored with the USOPA DFL award. The Dorothy Franey Langkop Ambassador Award was established in 2011 by the United States Olympians & Paralympians Association to recognize an individual or a program associated with a U.S. Olympians & Paralympians Chapter that demonstrates the special spirit of Olympism, has illustrated the Olympic and Paralympic ideals through their actions, or has rendered outstanding services to the Olympic and Paralympic cause.

Three-time Olympic champion Nancy Hogshead has dedicated her life to advancing access for women and girls in sport. As the Founder and CEO of Champion Women, Hogshead combines her experience as an elite athlete and civil rights attorney to advocate for equal opportunities, protection from sexual harassment and abuse, and the rights of women and girls in athletics.

For more than 14 years, Hogshead and Champion Women have been at the forefront of efforts to combat sexual abuse in club and Olympic and Paralympic sport, helping advocate for landmark federal legislation including the Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and SafeSport Authorization Act and the Empowering Olympians, Paralympians, and Amateur Athletes Act. Her work has also brought greater visibility to gender inequities in collegiate athletics. Through TitleIXSchools.com, she has made complex participation and financial data accessible to athletes, families, media and sport leaders, while highlighting systemic discrimination in women's athletics.

Hogshead's influence extends across the broader Olympic and Paralympic Movement and the sports community as a whole. She has served in leadership roles with organizations including the NCAA, Aspen Institute, Association of Title IX Administrators and World Olympians Association, testified before Congress and authored extensively on sports law, human rights and Title IX

Read More: Champion Women

SHARE YOUR STORY

Step up to The Podium and share your life updates, career milestones, and more with our USOPA community. Submissions will be featured on the Team USA alumni website and in the USOPA quarterly magazine.

LIFE UPDATES
FEATURE STORIES
CAREER MILESTONES
PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS
HALL OF FAME INDUCTIONS



A jubilant Shirley Babashoff after setting a world record in the 800-metre freestyle at the 1976 U.S. Olympic trials.
via britannica.com

Q3 USOPA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT REPOST

On the USOPC Alumni Relations team, it is our sincere mission to get to know, one by one, as many of you as possible. In that spirit, Robbie (Manager of Alumni Relations) and Kara (Director) write a column in the bi-weekly Scoop newsletter that shines light on one person at a time whose continued living example of the Spirit of the Games has moved us. Enjoy this recap of our features on your stories in our magazines moving forward!



FUNMI BLAKEMORE



Originally published 7/2/26, by Kara Winger

I first met my Olympic teammate Funmi Jimoh (an epic field event athlete name if you ask me, the rhythm just lends itself to success) in the polluted fog of Beijing 2008 training mornings, she committed to the reality of her long jump qualifying group the same that I was with my javelin one: Us, showing up right when the track opened each day, to force our bodies into complying with a call time that started with a 7 when it came time to step onto our respective Olympic runways. To be excellent when our names showed up on the board in the Bird's Nest. Funmi did that, making the final (top 12).

That fog smelled weird, felt heavy, stained my shirts, and caused me to start bringing shower gear and a change of clothes so that lunch next to me (or even in my own skin) at the training facility wasn't unbearable after practice each day. In that first out-of-comfort-zone Games environment and for years afterward, Funmilayo KJ Blakemore was a lifeline of steadiness and normalcy for me: She seemed like she had it all figured out, and I gravitated toward that. It's really fun to understand now that we were learning in tandem, that perhaps the reason we were mutually excited to see each other in so many places so many years later is that we provided familiarity for each other: This person was there from the beginning. But all I know is my own perspective: Funmi is a phenomenal, grounding, quietly-encouraging teammate.

The reason her support always stood out to me – in particular I can remember being in Kawasaki at a meet together in late September 2009, feeling alone but solidarity – is that it's genuine and timely, but not too much. She sees you, takes the time to spur you on, but doesn't seek attention or overdo. She's authentic, observant, and intentional.

"Being in the field as an athlete is a different experience: You get to observe a lot, see how people approach what they're doing. There's lots of waiting time between jumps." We align very much on this point: Witnessing others' greatness while pursuing our own is really fun. A big thing that Funmi took from being an athlete into the working world is relentlessness, but she says, "I don't need to be loud about it. I want to be as effective as I can. As athletes, we want to be excellent, and I don't think it stops at being an athlete."

"I love being an Olympian, I've wanted to be that since I was ten years old. And from that there are other opportunities in the world to be excellent. I like the question, 'do you want to be rich or famous?' I want to be rich with knowledge, abilities, relationships, and more."

After sport, Funmi took her honed focus and pursuit of excellence many places, working behind the scenes in lots of aspects of the sport she grew up in, from coaching to time on USA Track and Field's Law & Legislation Committee, as well as broader service on the NCAA Committee and a fulfilling role in her alma mater Rice's Athletics Administration office.

She says of all this learning about the inner workings of the thing she thought she understood (Track and Field), "You gotta give back, that's just what you do. No one gives you a handbook, but I knew that there were people in the space who had more knowledge than me that I could learn from. I'm not going to opine on things I don't understand, so I had to be observant, pay attention first. Finding that there's professional acumen in giving back was great: I get to give back, but also sharpen my communications and analytical skills."

She's deploying those skills these days as both USOPA Houston Chapter President – a robust and historically-engaged Chapter of USOPA that has great local relationships and a consistent presence, especially on Olympic and Paralympic Day each year – and as the Executive Director of the USOPC's Team USA Athletes' Commission. As USOPA Houston Chapter President, Funmi just gets to experience the joy of witnessing Olympic and Paralympic spirit in her community through events she plans with local organizations and facilitates for peers. She says she meets someone new all the time who loves the Games, and that keeping the grassroots spirit of Olympism and Paralympism alive from torch to torch is what drives her. The small touches of the Chapter in the community could have big ripples, and it's just a joy to be around the energy that the Games always bring.

Funmi began her Team USA AC role in January by heading straight to Milan-Cortina for her first Winter Games experience.

Her personal understanding of the USOPC and NGB universe has expanded in these roles. The Movement, to her, WAS track and field, but there are 50+ NGBs, so much nuance, and tons of diversity that she now sees. As Team USA AC's organizational leader, she says, "it makes me respect the organism that is the Olympic and Paralympic Movement so much more to be in this position."

The Team USA Athletes' Commission's vision statement is "To protect, empower and advocate for, and on behalf of, Team USA athletes and serve as a catalyst for positive change for the Movement." It is a group of peer-elected representatives from those 50+ National Governing Bodies. In many cases, an elected Team USA AC representative also serves on important-to-athlete-journey committees within their own NGB (such as a High Performance Committee, the one that decides on funding for elite athletes, distribution of health insurance benefits, and the like), as well as sits on their Board of Directors. Each representative reports back to their sport's Athletes' Commission as well (their own electorate), as the position is usually considered an officer role of that group. There is a huge opportunity for Team USA Athletes' Commission reps to listen to and speak for their peers in a lot of important rooms, and Funmi is uniquely suited to help those reps understand how to do that with her variety of observed, absorbed, and honed skills in many of those same rooms and her network of effective leaders within the Movement and outside of it.

She offers that athletes have lived experience and passion, as well as proximity to their careers in that first decade of retirement that can help inform how to shape the world for the generations that come behind them. She sees it as her and her fellow AC leaders' responsibility to inject the skills necessary to operate excellently within Boards of Directors and on other Committees within their NGBs and in the broader ecosystem of the Movement: She wants to empower confidence in Team USA AC members in spaces where the polished athlete voice actually gets delivered and acted upon. And while she didn't engage with governance during her athletic career, she says that navigating governance structures and developing strategies for delivering impactful athlete voice can only bolster an athlete's overall story: Build multiple skillsets at once, athletic and otherwise. Consider, too, that this other connection to sport, while not an official transition service, could be helpful. It was, and continues to be, to Funmi.

Here in Alumni Relations, we're also aligned on finding more roles for athletes outside of their 10-year window to serve on Boards and NGB Committees: Professional development doesn't only happen within the Movement, and all of your voices are valuable. Funmi wants you to be involved, but like in all things, she's not going to yell about it. It's your choice. She'll just authentically support you toward the excellence she knows is in there.

Thank you for your quiet pursuit, and on behalf of the athlete voice at that, Funmi. Proud to be your peer.

If you're interested in getting involved with the Team USA Athletes' Commission, check out their website, read their bylaws, and learn about the election process (takes place each Summer Games year). You can also talk to your sport's current elected representative about the role and how you can help by finding them here. Not quite ready for Team USA AC leadership? Your Team USA AC rep can also help you figure out how to get plugged in with your NGB's Athletes' Commission, and we in Alumni Relations would love to help you (with the help of Funmi and her colleagues) find a leadership opportunity for 10+ athletes if you're in that category. Let us know.



U.S. women's swim team celebrating their upset victory in the 4x100-meter freestyle relay at the 1976 Summer Olympics in Montreal. Shirley Babashoff, Wendy Boglioli, Kim Peyton, Jill Sterkel
via NYTimes.com

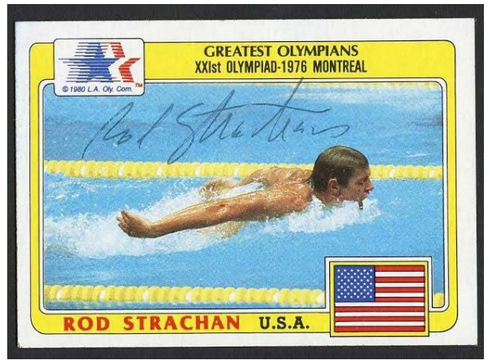
1976 SWIM & DIVE TEAMS

Originally published 7/31/26, by Kara Winger

They could have gone anywhere. It seems that they've been everywhere, together, for 50 years. Weddings, vacations, other milestone reunions, and inevitably (and in some cases, all too soon), teammates' funerals. I'm talking about the 1976 Swim & Dive teams. Team.

They chose to come here, to Colorado Springs, to celebrate 5 decades since their historic performances on their shared pool deck, the very week of July that they swam and dove into the record books in Montreal. There was a rooftop happy hour. We had lunch, a photo opportunity, a tour and some shopping at the Olympic & Paralympic Training Center. They were rightfully wined and dined by the USA Swimming Foundation at a reception. And they visited the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum, home to all U.S. Olympians and Paralympians. But most importantly, they were together.

I don't think it would have truly mattered what they did all weekend, but to see them reminded of many days training (or coaching later in life) on campus, joking in moments that remind us of athlete days gone by (photo bombs, references to Village activities, even the idea of picking up a weight or pulling the resistance system in the pool), and sharing continued mourning moments for teammates missing and by quick turns, remaining discontent with certain parts of the journey that unfolded for them, made the whole point of my job so obvious to me: Connection. I've learned this over, and over, and in Robbie's trips to your USOPA Chapter events and Legacy Lattes, and in Christine's 35 years of phone calls that help in small-but-big ways as well as planning large-scale events that facilitate that connection, we're all on the same page: Your relationships with each other are the currency that we operate in. The high of seeing you together, feeling how we all once did when we were actually on the proverbial deck, court, runway, or any field of play, supported by teammates who also know what it's like to run the gamut of Olympic or Paralympic selection, and then deal with pressures both foreseen and unforeseen in the lead-up to and execution of the Games, only to come out the other side after a whirlwind that might leave you questioning what you did actually learn for years to come. But what you know in your gut is this: Your teammates get you. And they've got you.



We want to facilitate more of that. Please let us know if you and your team would like to come our way. We're very into fostering this belonging.

Two divers, Jennifer Stevenson (gold in 1976 3m springboard and continued USOPA Alabama Chapter President as well as prolific contributor to the Movement in many ways professionally) and Rob Cragg (5th in 1976 3m springboard and long-time University of Pennsylvania coach) spent their weekend with roughly 30 swimmers. Seeing Karen Moe Humphreys joke in an undercurrent of mischievousness, bite, and pure energy that she must have always had brought me joy all day. Connecting with Brian and Vicki Goodell over lunch on family and life after sport helped me feel grounded in another athlete's experience. Appreciating Rod Strachan's light-heartedness in most interactions, and learning of his long medical career gave me perspective that attitude through adversity (because I've always seen the emotional turmoil of medicine as wildly impressive to navigate) is everything. Connecting with Jill Sterkel over one of the Olympians that she coached at Texas that I used to work with (B.J. Miller) was just a small moment of continued community build. The quiet steadiness of Gary Hall Sr., knowing that he'd lived, supportively and spectacularly, in Mark Spitz's prolific shadow in 1972 and been elevated by his 1976 teammates to Flag Bearer status to round out his three-Olympics career, is a gravity I kept my eye on. Experiencing Wendy Boglioli's warmth, openness, and steady drive even in just a few short conversations inspired me to keep growing, and seeing her reflections on this weekend and life in the aftermath of the weekend remind me to keep revisiting the stories of my sport life to uncover remaining lessons. And watching the energy of John Naber come out in care for his teammates in coordinating this weekend, ensuring that it was captured in many versions of team pictures, and allowing his exuberance, per usual, to shine bright, was quite moving.

On July 25th, the day after meeting these legendary teams, I watched The Last Gold, 50 years to the day since Jim Montgomery became the first man to ever break 50 seconds in the 100m freestyle and Kim Peyton, Wendy Boglioli, Jill Sterkel, and Shirley Babashoff won the women's only gold of the Games. Highly, highly recommend, for the amazing story that it is, sure, but mostly for the showcase of connection of these amazing humans to each other. It was an honor to witness that phenomenon continue, and grow, this past weekend.

They fought well. They supported and continue to support each other. And they, like so many of you, exemplify what it is to be an athlete in this Movement.

Thank you for your authenticity, 1976 Swim & Dive Teams. So proud to be your peer.



DAVID OLIVER III

Originally published 8/14/26, by Robbie Fulton

Perseverance is a word that perfectly captures the journey of David Oliver III, OLY. In his recent Team USA Alumni Spotlight conversation, David reflected on his path from a young multi-sport athlete with big dreams to an Olympic medalist representing Team USA. He shared how the 110m hurdles is one of the toughest events in track and field to truly leave your mark on, and how perseverance was one of the biggest reasons he was able to do just that.

As an Olympic bronze medalist in the 110m hurdles, David emphasized that success is rarely a straight line. Throughout his career, he learned the importance of staying committed to long-term goals, trusting the process, and continuing to move forward even when progress was not always visible. Those experiences helped shape the resilience, confidence, and perspective that carried him through years of elite competition and ultimately onto the Olympic podium.

Today, David continues to make an impact as Director of Track & Field at Howard University, where he uses the lessons that he learned as an athlete to mentor and develop the next generation of young people. During our conversation, David shared that his coaching journey was somewhat unique. Before accepting the opportunity at Howard, he had never coached before, but the Athletic Director took a chance on him. And here comes perseverance again. David embraced the role with what he described as a "high give-a-care factor." He explained that if he's going to do something, he's always going to strive to be the best at it. Since taking over the program, David has been a bright spot as the leader of Howard Track & Field. During the 2025-26 outdoor season, he was named MEAC Outstanding Coach after guiding his team to its fifth straight conference championship, while also helping numerous athletes advance to the NCAA Championship Rounds.

From athlete to coach, David spoke about the value of leadership, pursuit, and mentorship, noting that the knowledge gained through sport can have a lasting influence far beyond competition. His commitment to helping student-athletes grow both on and off the track reflects his passion for leaving the sport stronger than he found it. Whether he was competing for Howard as student-athlete, Team USA or now leading the next generation at Howard University, David's story is evidence to the power of perseverance and the impact that can be made when you fully commit to the journey.

As a member of the Team USA Alumni Class of 2025, David also highlighted the importance of remaining connected to the Team USA community. Whether sharing stories from his Olympic journey, supporting fellow alumni, or mentoring current Team USA athletes, he continues to embody the values of excellence, leadership, and perseverance. His story serves as a reminder that being a part of Team USA is more than achieving success in competition. It is about carrying those lessons forward and using them to inspire others for life.





JOHN MORGAN

Originally published 8/28/26, by Robbie Fulton

The Unstoppable Spirit of John Morgan. Paralympic champion. Hall of Famer. Mathematician. Marathon swimmer.

Whatever title you choose for John Morgan, none fully captures the determination that have defined his life. A two-time Paralympian and 15-time Paralympic medalist, Morgan built one of the most accomplished careers in Paralympic swimming history. Yet his legacy extends far beyond medals and world records. His story is one of resilience, adaptability, and an unwavering belief that life's greatest challenges can become opportunities for growth.

Born in San Gabriel, California, Morgan developed a love for the water at an early age. He joined a local swim team, worked as a junior lifeguard, and spent much of his childhood around the beach. Swimming was not simply an activity. It was a central part of who he was.

When Morgan was 13 years old, his family moved to Argentina, where he continued to thrive as an athlete. By age 15, he had already completed a 20-kilometer marathon swim, demonstrating an endurance and determination that would become hallmarks of his career. At that point, a future in competitive swimming seemed certain. Then everything changed.

While training, Morgan suffered a devastating accident when a spring-loaded exercise device snapped and struck him in the face. Despite undergoing multiple surgeries, his eyesight continued to deteriorate until he lost his vision completely at the age of 18.

Fortunately, that chapter was not the end of the story.

Encouraged by his parents, Morgan attended a swim meet for athletes with disabilities. He was surrounded by competitors facing challenges of their own, he rediscovered the sport that had always been such an important part of his life. Returning to the pool, he learned new techniques, adapted to competition without sight, and began building a remarkable second chapter.

That is when this chapter quickly turned historic.

Competing for Team USA at the 1984 Paralympic Games in New York, Morgan captured five gold medals and announced himself as one of the world's premier Paralympic swimmers. After pursuing graduate studies at the University of California, Berkeley, he returned to the Paralympic stage at the 1992 Games in Barcelona where he delivered one of the most dominant performances in Paralympic swimming history, winning medals in all ten events he entered. Eight of those medals were gold and two were silver. By the end of his Paralympic career, Morgan had amassed 15 Paralympic medals, including an extraordinary 13 gold medals.

Morgan's pursuits were not limited to athletics. Alongside his athletic career, he invested heavily in education. He attended Golden West Junior College before earning degrees from the University of California, Irvine, and the University of California, Berkeley. He later built a professional career as a mathematician at the U.S. Army Research Laboratory, demonstrating the same commitment to excellence that characterized his time in the pool.

Recognition for Morgan's accomplishments has followed. In 2008, he was inducted into the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Hall of Fame, a fitting honor for an athlete whose impact on Paralympic sport remains significant. Three years later, he was inducted into the U.S. Association of Blind Athletes Hall of Fame, further cementing his place among the most accomplished athletes in the history of adaptive sport.

Today, Morgan's story continues to resonate because it represents something larger than athletic achievement. His journey demonstrates the transformative power of resilience and the importance of embracing opportunity in the face of adversity. He overcame the loss of his vision to become one of the most decorated Paralympic swimmers of his era, while also pursuing education, professional success, and lifelong adventure. And to this day John is still competing but not just to win, but to be happy and give himself something to look forward to!

To John Morgan, from the USOPC Alumni Relations Team: thank you.



ELI BREMER

Originally published 9/11/26, by Robbie Fulton

Olympism has a core principle to place sport in the service of human development and a peaceful society. Like the interconnected Olympic rings, Olympic pentathlete Eli Bremer and his uncle, former U.S. Ambassador Paul Bremer, share a story that comes full circle through an unexpected connection to the events of September 11, 2001, demonstrating how sport, service, and personal growth can intersect in profound ways.

Like many Americans, Eli remembers exactly where he was on 9/11. He had just become a resident athlete at the U.S. Olympic Training Center (now the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Training Center) in Colorado Springs while still serving in the U.S. Air Force. That morning, he received a call directing him to report to Schriever Air Force Base to be briefed on the unfolding attacks.

A few years later, after the fall of Saddam Hussein's regime, Eli's uncle Paul was asked to lead the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq, helping rebuild the nation during one of the most consequential international efforts that followed 9/11.

While one Bremer pursued Olympic dreams through sport, the other carried the immense responsibility of diplomacy, leadership, and reconstruction. As Eli traveled internationally with the U.S. national team, media outlets often focused on the parallel paths of nephew and uncle. What few realized, however, was that Paul's work would eventually intersect with the Olympic Movement as well.

Believing that sport could provide hope and unity during a period of uncertainty, Paul made it a priority to help recertify Iraq's Olympic program. Once the team was cleared to compete, he hosted a sendoff event for Iraqi wrestlers and judokas before asking Eli to welcome them at the U.S. Olympic Training Center.

Eli expected a simple introduction. Instead, he experienced a moment he would never forget.

"I went in to give them a handshake, and they all almost came in for hugs, saying, 'Your uncle saved my life, and we are grateful for him.'"

As the Olympic Games Athens 2004 approached, Eli was still chasing his own Olympic dream. Injuries ultimately prevented him from competing, but he found another way to be part of the Games by working for NBC during the Opening and Closing Ceremonies.

Inside the Athens Olympic Stadium, he witnessed one of the most emotional moments of the Games. The Iraqi Olympic Team entered the Opening Ceremony to a standing ovation from spectators around the world. Just a few years removed from war and instability, the athletes represented resilience, hope, and the unifying power of sport.

For Eli, the moment was deeply personal. His uncle had played a role in Iraq's rebuilding efforts, and now he was watching Iraqi athletes take their place on the world's biggest sporting stage.

What began with the tragedy of September 11 had come full circle.

The experience reinforced the very heart of Olympism: sport's unique ability to unite people, transcend conflict, and inspire hope.

"It proves that sport transcends everything else," Eli said. "Twenty-five years after 9/11, being involved in organizing the Military World Games reminds me how much my uncle's work impacted me and so many others around the world."

Please email or call Kara (719-606-9834) or Robbie (email or 719-235-7892) if you'd like to chat.



ADE SPOTLIGHT



2026 U.S. OLYMPIC & PARALYMPIC TEAMS REUNITE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

U.S. President Donald Trump hosts Olympic medal-winning athletes at a reception for Team USA for the 2026 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games at the East Room of the White House on August 6, 2026 in Washington, DC. Trump honored the team's medal achievements at this year's Winter Games, where American athletes earned 57 total medals, including 25 gold.

2026 U.S. Olympians and Paralympians came together in August at the Team USA Athlete Summit to strengthen their networks, learn from industry experts and explore opportunities that support their long-term success. From building personal brands and exploring career opportunities to learning from industry experts and connecting with fellow athletes, Team USA partners and professionals across a variety of fields, the summit provided valuable resources and connections to support athletes both during and beyond their competitive careers.





The Summit was hosted by a familiar face who knows firsthand what it means to stand in the athletes' shoes: eight-time Olympic medalist and Olympic Hall of Famer Apolo Anton Ohno. Drawing from his own experiences both on and beyond the Olympic stage, Ohno shared insights and encouragement with the group, setting the tone for a day focused on reflection, connection and looking ahead. He challenged athletes to recognize the value of their experiences and consider how they can use the lessons, relationships and skills gained through sport to power whatever comes next.

"Your sport is what you do. It has never been the whole of who you are. The discipline. The ability to suffer well. To adapt on the fly. To lose on a Sunday and still show up on a Monday. To deliver when everything is on the line. Those didn't stay on the ice when I left. They were never skating skills. They were me. And yours... are you. Everything that made you world-class transfers to your next play. Every bit of it."



The celebration concluded with a visit to the White House, where athletes heard remarks from the President and toured a portion of the historic landmark, and an evening reception at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

"Seeing the joy and pride on the faces of Team USA athletes as Olympians and Paralympians came together to celebrate their remarkable journeys was truly inspiring," said Rocky Harris, USOPC Chief of Sport and Athlete Services. "From the Athlete Summit to the White House and Oval Office, these moments gave us an opportunity to honor their accomplishments, strengthen the bonds that unite Team USA and celebrate the incredible camaraderie among this group. The overwhelmingly positive feedback from athletes reinforced just how meaningful it is to create opportunities to reconnect, celebrate one another and find motivation for whatever comes next."

Thank you to all the athletes who joined us!

By Melanie Phillips & USOPC Communications

TEAM USA LEGACY WELCOME



Ladies short track speed skater Amy Peterson carries the American flag at the Opening Ceremony of the 2002 Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games at the Rice-Eccles Olympic Stadium February 8, 2002 in Salt Lake City, UT.

As Team USA prepares for a defining decade of sport ahead, the Legacy team plays a central role in shaping how that impact endures far beyond the Games themselves. The team is focused on building meaningful, lasting connections between athletes, communities and the broader Olympic & Paralympic Movement.

Legacy ensures that Team USA's influence extends far beyond the podium, elevating and sharing the stories that reflect who we are while also creating enduring cultural and social impact that lives on long after the Olympic and Paralympic Games conclude. Team USA is defined not only by excellence in competition, but by how Team USA inspires belonging and empowers future generations of athletes and fans.

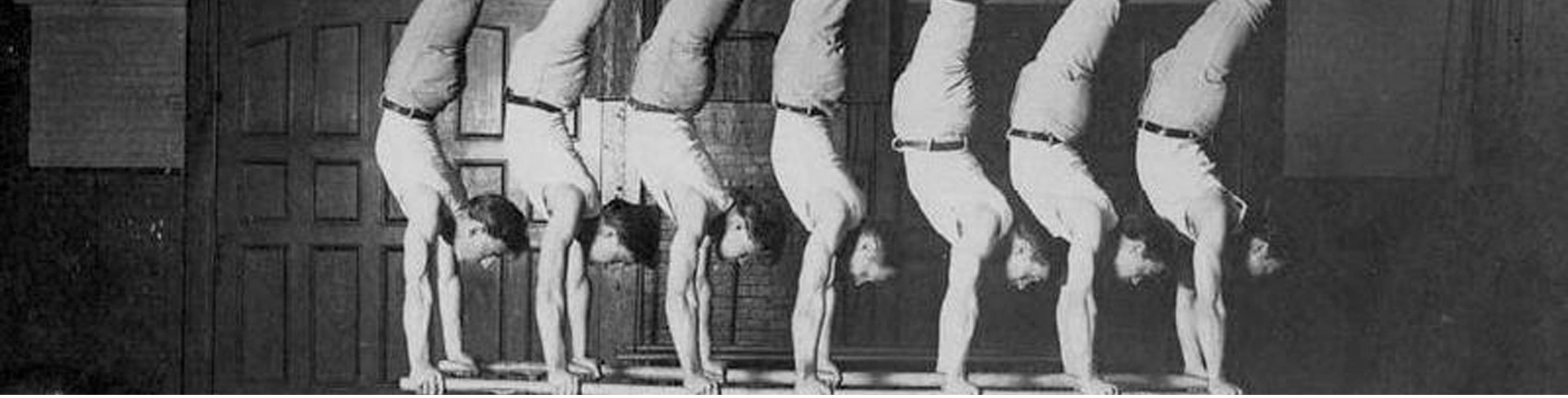
Bringing together a holistic set of focus areas, the Legacy team works at the intersection of strategy, community activation, storytelling and education. Team USA Legacy is working on the following initiatives

- Oversee Paralympic strategy and legacy efforts to strengthen awareness, expand engagement and drive long-term growth of the Paralympic Movement.
- Build and scale the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Education Program as a national platform for learning, values and fandom.
- Activate Team USA communities, including Colorado Springs and past and future Olympic and Paralympic host cities, through legacy partnerships, local engagement and events.
- Preserve and elevate Team USA history by capturing athlete stories, proving impact and stewarding the Crawford Family Archives.

Each area plays a distinct role in advancing a cohesive legacy strategy that connects Team USA's past, present and future. Together, we bring Olympic and Paralympic legacy to life through education, community engagement, preservation and strategic partnerships—strengthening connections to Team USA, expanding access and fandom, and creating lasting impact for generations to come.

Annemarie Blanco
Director of Team USA Legacy
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Suzu Cornella
Manager of Team USA Legacy
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By Max Montiel, Archives Researcher

The Team USA History Interactive Timeline is now available to the public! For the past few months, I've had the privilege of serving as the lead researcher for the Team USA History Timeline Project at the Crawford Family U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee Archives.

The timeline takes you on a journey through more than a century of Olympic and Paralympic history from Team USA's point of view. Each Games features selected athletes, their stories, and statistics that help bring the history of Team USA to life. While conducting the research, the most difficult part of the project wasn't the research itself but deciding which stories we couldn't include. So many stories ultimately had to be left on the cutting-room floor.





The research drew upon an enormous range of sources, including Olympedia, the International Paralympic Committee, and Official Reports published by the Organizing Committees of the Games dating back to 1896, whenever English translations were available. (As a figure skating fan, I also took some storytelling inspiration from the Lore Series of the Runthrough Podcast, hosted by Olympians Adam Rippon and Ashley Wagner, and Not-Olympic-Champion Sarah Hughes.) One of the most rewarding parts of the research was discovering athletes whose stories have largely been lost to time. In some cases, we can trace an athlete's legacy to something we still have today, like George Orton introducing the sport of ice hockey to Philadelphia; in others, the trail simply disappears. Anton Heida, for example, was the top athlete at the 1904 Olympic Games, yet there is no evidence of his life after 1921.

The timeline also offers a glimpse into the collections of the Crawford Family U.S. Olympic and Paralympic Committee Archives. The Crawford Family Collection of gold, silver, and bronze prize medals is highlighted at each Games, beginning with the first Olympics in 1896. Olympic torches are showcased as well, starting with the 1936 Berlin Games, when the Olympic torch relay was introduced. The oldest artifact featured is an Olympic blazer from the 1912 Stockholm Games, distinguished by its striking Swedish blue and yellow colors.

Beyond medals and torches, the timeline includes artifacts that provide a more personal connection to the athletes and Games. I'm particularly drawn to artifacts from athletes such as Jack Whitman (below),



the first American Paralympic champion, whose letters, medals, and other memorabilia help tell the story of his Paralympic career. Other highlights include Peggy Fleming's (left)famous chartreuse 1968 figure skating costume, Bonnie Blair's skates from Albertville 1992, a signed 1998 Team USA women's hockey jersey, Raymond Martin's (below)racing chair from London 2012, and the official Team USA Beijing 2022 Paralympic Winter Games Closing Ceremony uniform.



This is just the tip of the iceberg! Check out the full timeline on TeamUSA.com to explore the complete history. You can access it by clicking the History link at the top of the homepage. If you want to learn more, please reach out to archives@usopc.org to schedule a tour or research visit. We're proud to help share the many people, stories, and moments that together make up the rich and diverse legacy of Team USA.



United States Olympic & Paralympic Museum™

USOPM x Team USA AC x USOPA

The U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum (USOPM), a cornerstone of the Colorado Springs community, offers visitors one of the most distinctive museum experiences in the world. During the 2026 U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Assembly, the museum welcomed members of the Team USA Athletes' Commission (AC) and the U.S. Olympians & Paralympians Association (USOPA) for a Friday evening reception and private museum tour. Guests also had the opportunity to experience the museum's newest exhibit, U.S. Olympic Decathletes.

The evening was filled with laughter, meaningful conversation, and shared memories as Team USA AC and USOPA members gathered in a space that celebrates the legacy of Team USA. For many athletes, the museum featured personal connections through artifacts, stories, and exhibits that reflected their journeys. For staff members, including myself, it was a surreal experience to hear firsthand stories behind the innovations of Dr. Rory Cooper, PLY, learn more about the boycotted Olympic Games from Willie Banks, OLY and John McArdle, OLY and see the game-worn uniform of John Kusku, PLY.

The reception also highlighted the growing partnership between the Team USA Athletes' Commission and USOPA, providing an opportunity for athletes and alumni to strengthen relationships and explore future collaboration.

"Team USA Athletes' Commission representatives and leadership truly value opportunities to connect and collaborate with organizations across the Movement. We saw the reception at the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Museum as a great opportunity to bring our communities together, reengage with USOPA members and strengthen those relationships while we were all in Colorado Springs. It was a meaningful way to connect outside of our regular meetings and create space for athletes and former Olympians and Paralympians to network, share experiences and continue building a strong athlete community," said Bri Oyler, Team USA Athletes' Commission Coordinator.

Huge thank you to the USOPM for making athletes and alumni feel seen, and an extended thank you to the Team USA Athletes' Commission for inviting the USOPA Executive Committee to join the reception. The evening served as another launch pad for the momentum that will fuel future collaboration.

The event was a celebration of the shared history, achievements, and continued impact of Team USA athletes, bringing together generations of Olympians and Paralympians in a place dedicated to preserving and telling their stories.

For USOPA members – If you've visited the museum before and signed a diamond tile, it's now displayed! Come back and check it out.

As Team USA Olympic and Paralympic alumni, you receive complimentary admission! Explore the incredible legacy of Team USA through guided tours, live artifact demonstrations, and engaging events designed to bring history to life. Have questions or want to connect? Reach out to us at athletes@usopm.org for more information.

OLYMPIANS & PARALYMPIANS OPRF RELIEF FUND

The U.S. Olympians & Paralympians Relief Fund (OPRF) provides support to U.S. Olympians and Paralympians who are recovering from natural disasters and other hardships.

Our *PURPOSE* remains steadfast

To offer financial assistance and solidarity to U.S. Olympians and Paralympians facing difficulties or hardships (such as personal loss, injury, accident, illness, or natural disaster) in the past twelve months.

Our *MISSION* continues unwavering

To raise funds, guide USOPA members through the application process, and provide OPRF Financial Assistance Grants to eligible members meeting the qualifying guidelines.

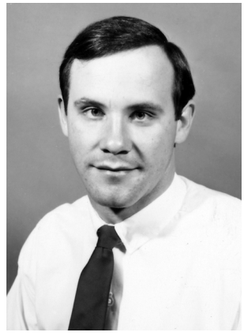
For information on how to apply for a grant, visit OPR.fund.

Please contribute if you can. Here are ways to give:
- Visit OPR.fund
- Click the DONATE button and give through PayPal
- Write a check and mail it to the address on our website.
- Arrange for a disbursement from your donor-advised fund (DAF) or family foundation.
- Make a distribution from your IRA or another retirement account.

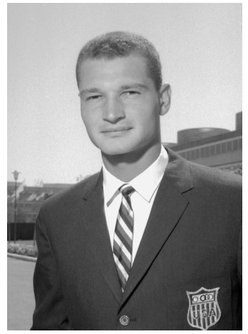
IN MEMORIAM



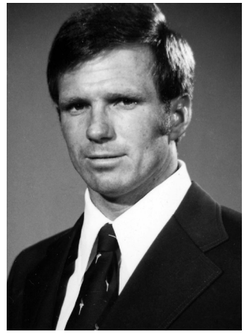
Michael Stamm
Swimming 1972



Michael "Mickey" Luce
Bobsled and Skeleton 1968



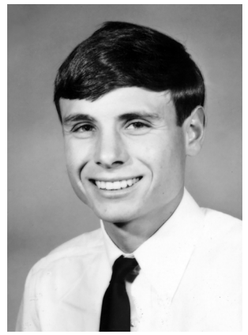
Gayle Thompson
Rowing 1960



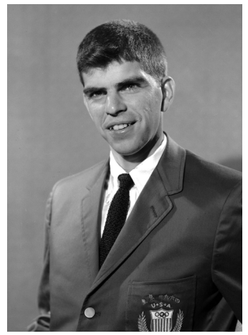
Michael Burton
Swimming 1968, '72



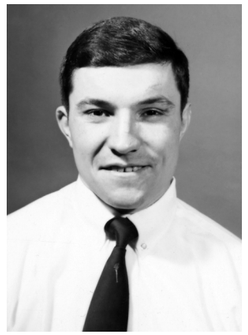
Samuel Bigler
Weightlifting 1976



Jon Lufkin
Ski and Snowboard 1968



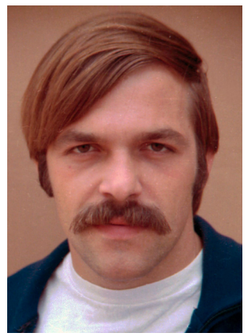
John "Jack" Mortland
Track and Field 1964



John Dale
Ice Hockey 1968



Elaine Cheris
Fencing 1980, '88, '96



William Schmidt
Track and Field 1972



Mary Stack
Para Powerlifting 2000, '04, '08, '12



Armando Vega
Gymnastics 1956



“ONCE AN OLYMPIAN OR PARALYMPIAN, ALWAYS AN OLYMPIAN OR PARALYMPIAN. NEVER FORMER, NEVER PAST”



8 Feb 2002: US team athletes Biathlete Kristina Sabasteanski, Skeleton competitor Lee Ann Parsley, Curler Stacey Liapis, figure skater Todd Eldredge, ice hockey player Angelo Ruggiero, Luge competitor Mark Grimmette, snowboarder Chris Klug and speed skater Derek Parra hold the US Flag found at Ground Zero as New York Fire Department members salute behind them during the Opening Ceremony of the Salt Lake City Winter Olympic Games at the Rice-Eccles Olympic Stadium in Salt Lake City, Utah. DIGITAL IMAGE.
Mandatory Credit: Clive Brunskill/Getty Images

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